REMARKS:

Claims 1-12 currently are pending. Claims 13-15 previously were canceled as withdrawn from consideration for being directed to unelected species.

The Examiner finally rejected claims 1, 3, and 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heath et al. ('859). The Examiner believes that the use of a flexible thermoplastic elastomeric bonding agent as recited in claim 1 of the present invention is implied by the disclosure of Heath et al., essentially because Heath et al. state at column 1, line 56, that the bonding agent is "sympathetic to the components" used, i.e., to both the textile and non-textile parts of the fibercloth.

If the phrase above in Heath et al. is being interpreted by the Examiner to inherently teach bonding to textile and non-textile parts because "components" is plural, then what would happen when the textile is thermoplastic (as it will be) and the non-textile part is molded rubber or synthetic rubber (as disclosed at col. 1, lines 36-37)? In such an instance, the bonding agent clearly cannot be the same as both components. Indeed, Heath et al. provide a clear answer in the patent itself: "The bonding agent is essentially sympathetic to the components. Conveniently, it is of the same material of the filter cloth, where possible, e.g., where a polypropylene filter cloth is employed, the bonding agent itself may be polypropylene, and so on" (col. 1, lines 56-60). In other words, where the textile component is thermoplastic, the bonding agent will be also be thermoplastic regardless of the nature of the non-textile component.

That the sole teaching of the '859 patent is that the bonding agent is only sympathetic to the textile part regardless of the composition of the none-textile part is supported by the claim, which is limited to "a method of making a filter...by locating an annular piece comprising a thermoplastic bonding agent mixed with a ferrous metal powder...."

In reality, the textile component of a filter cloth for a filter press, as understood by a person skilled in the art, will always be a thermoplastic chosen from the list polypropylene, nylon, or polyester. Hence, Heath et al. teach that the bonding agent matches this, i.e., the bonding agent is thermoplastic. The design option of including a thermoplastic rubber as the non-textile component does not alter the fact that the teachings of Heath et al. still instruct a user only to match thermoplastic textiles and bonding agents—the inherent drawbacks of which are described in the applicant's previous submissions. At most, the Examiner's interpretation simply raises an ambiguity of the '859 patent because Heath et al. clearly have not disclosed or suggested how one may have a bonding agent that is sympathetic to two components of different composition.

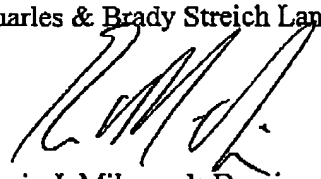
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 3, and 9-12 be reconsidered.

Except for the fee enclosed herewith for the Request for Continued Examination and the fee for a petition for a two-month extension of time, no fee is believed to be due with this

response. Should there be any unforeseen costs, please charge our Deposit Account No. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

Quarles & Brady Streich Lang, LLP



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